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Summary record of the 20th meeting
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Chair: Mr. Tommo Monthe ..... (Cameroon)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Torres Lépori

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 152: Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (*continued*) (A/C.5/66/L.5)

Draft resolution A/C.5/66/L.5: Financing of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

1. *Draft resolution A/C.5/66/L.5 was adopted.*

Agenda item 162: Financing of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (A/66/519 and A/66/575)

Agenda item 147: Financing of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (A/66/526 and A/66/576)

2. **Ms. Casar** (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the revised budget for the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 (A/66/519), recalled that, while the General Assembly, in its resolution 65/257 B, had appropriated an amount of $482,460,550 for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2011, the Security Council, by its resolution 1997 (2011), had decided to withdraw UNMIS effective 11 July 2011. Consequently, the proposed 2011/12 budget for UNMIS had been reduced by 85.5 per cent to $137,532,000. Those proposed requirements would provide for the withdrawal and administrative liquidation of the Mission, which was expected to be completed by 31 December 2011 and would entail the conclusion of programmes; repatriation, transfer to other missions, or separation of 10,352 uniformed personnel and 4,057 civilian personnel; restoration and handover of premises; and completion of administrative and related actions. The estimates also included provisions for the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sudan and South Sudan for the period from 1 August to 31 December 2011. The actions requested of the General Assembly were set out in paragraph 47 of the report.

3. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the budget for the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 (A/66/526), she recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 65/257 B, had authorized the Secretary-General to draw upon the resources approved for UNMIS in entering into commitments for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2011 for UNISFA, which had been established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1990 (2011). The proposed budget for UNISFA amounted to $180,691,900 and provided for the deployment of military, police and civilian personnel, and related operational costs. Cost estimates included some $80.5 million for military contingents, including provisions for reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, rations, freight and deployment costs for contingent-owned equipment; $31.1 million for facilities and infrastructure, including construction; and $22.9 million for air transportation. The actions requested of the General Assembly were set out in paragraph 103 of the report.

4. **Mr. Torres Lépori** (Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related reports of the Advisory Committee (A/66/575 and A/66/576), said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposals in connection with the financing of UNMIS. It expected that the Mission would make every effort to adhere to the planned withdrawal and liquidation schedule and to ensure an efficient and effective liquidation process.

5. Taking into account the delays experienced in the establishment of UNISFA, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the resources proposed by the Secretary-General for that mission for the 2011/12 period, adjusted in accordance with revised projections for the deployment of mission personnel. The Advisory Committee also recommended a reduction of $3.2 million under facilities and infrastructure, in view of the obstacles confronting UNISFA in commencing planned construction projects. As at 31 October 2011, the mission had deployed 28 international staff members but had been unable to recruit any national staff; in that connection, the Advisory Committee encouraged it to place a high priority on the recruitment of civilian personnel, especially against national posts in the Abyei Area.

6. While the Regional Service Centre would provide services to UNISFA, the mission would not finance posts for that Centre in the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012. The Advisory Committee trusted that in the future the Secretary-General would incorporate the provision of integrated back-office administrative functions provided by the Regional Service Centre in a comprehensive manner into the budgets of client

missions. It also considered that the Secretary-General should include a separate section on the Regional Service Centre in mission budgets, providing details on the nature and scope of services and highlighting any efficiency gains anticipated to be derived by each client mission.

7. **Mr. Coffi** (Côte d'Ivoire), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Group welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal in connection with the financing of UNMIS and concurred with the Advisory Committee that, in its liquidation process, the Mission should continue to apply lessons learned from the closed peacekeeping operations, with particular attention being paid to the disposal of assets in order to mitigate risks. All outstanding amounts and claims should be settled expeditiously.

8. The Group was pleased to note that, five months after the establishment of UNISFA, more than two thirds of the authorized troops were on the ground and the Mission was in a position to perform its mandate, thanks to the efforts of the Government of Ethiopia and the United Nations, with the active support of the two Sudanese parties. It was also gratifying that preparations had been finalized to deploy the full component of the contingent before the beginning of 2012.

9. The initial deployment of UNISFA had taken place despite numerous obstacles, including heavy rains that had washed away the land route between Kadugli and Abyei, halting all road movements and severely restricting the induction of UNISFA personnel. Road conditions had, however, significantly improved with the onset of the dry season, enhancing the mission's visibility and security presence. The Group, aware that UNISFA was operating in a very complex, demanding and dangerous environment, stressed the need to provide the mission with adequate resources to effectively implement its mandates. Noting that the Advisory Committee had recommended a reduction in the level of proposed resources for UNISFA, he requested the Secretariat to provide additional information during informal consultations on both the Secretary-General's proposals and the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. The Group was determined to examine the matter with a view to ensuring that adequate resources were provided for UNISFA as proposed by the Secretary-General.

10. **Mr. Bame** (Ethiopia), noting that UNISFA was now conducting regular visits to population centres and engaging in liaison work with local communities, said that access throughout the area of operations had been enhanced by a new bridge, financed by the Government of Ethiopia and constructed by Ethiopian engineers, that had replaced the Banton Bridge destroyed during the May 2011 conflict. The bridge was an important crossing point between Abyei town and Agok that would facilitate the return of internally displaced persons, humanitarian access and the operations of UNISFA, as well as commercial transport.

11. While no status-of-forces agreement had as yet been signed, discussions were continuing with both Governments and it was to be hoped that the agreement would shortly be concluded. A number of outstanding issues should be resolved by the quadripartite consultative mechanism for UNISFA established between the United Nations and the Governments of Ethiopia, the Sudan and South Sudan, which was scheduled to hold its second meeting on 3 December 2011.

12. The annual Misseriya migration southwards through the Abyei Area, which had already begun, must be handled with care and the necessary preparation, while the Ngok Dinka displaced population must also be able to return to Abyei in time for the planting season. In that regard, the role of UNISFA would be crucial in helping the communities to overcome potential complications and sensitivities and avoid the risk of conflict. Recalling that the tragic death of several members of UNISFA on 2 August 2011 had highlighted the increased threat posed by landmines, he stressed the urgent need for landmine identification and clearance in order to facilitate the return of internally displaced persons and the safety of populations in the upcoming migration period, as well as the mission's operations.

13. His delegation was extremely concerned that the Advisory Committee had proposed reductions in the budget for UNISFA. He asked the Secretariat to provide further clarification regarding the impact of such a reduction, if approved, on the full deployment of UNISFA and the implementation of its complex and sensitive mandate. Any decision on the matter should be based on the latest deployment plan and take into account the critical nature of the mission. In view of the current situation on the ground, his delegation fully

supported the budget for UNISFA proposed by the Secretary-General.

14. **Ms. Casar** (Controller), stressing the importance of ensuring that UNMIS was properly liquidated and that UNISFA received the resources it needed to implement its mandate, said she had taken note of the points raised by the representative of Ethiopia and would address them in greater detail during informal consultations.

15. **Mr. Torres Lépori** (Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that he understood the concerns raised by the representatives of Côte d'Ivoire and Ethiopia and wished to assure delegations that the Advisory Committee's aim was to ensure that UNISFA received funding appropriate to its requirements. The intention was certainly not to undermine the funding of that important mission, particularly in the current start-up phase of operations. During its hearings, the Advisory Committee had become aware that deployment of the mission was proceeding more slowly than originally planned; it was for that reason that it had proposed an adjustment in the vacancy rate. The proposed reduction in the requested resources under facilities and infrastructure reflected the identified obstacles to the commencement of construction projects and would not affect future planned implementation and construction activities.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.